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Tim W Hayes 03/02/2007 04:15:18 PM From DB/Inbox: Tim W Hayes

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Text:

UNCLAS ANKARA 00354

SIPDIS
CX:

ACTION: ECON
INFO: CONS PA RAO FCS POL DCM AMB FAS MGT PMA

DISSEMINATION: ECON /1
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: ECON:TGOLDBERGER
DRAFTED: ECON:DYOUNG, FAS: CG
CLEARED: ECON:AS,AS, FAS:RG, MED:CG, ADANA:EG

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1006
INFO RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 1630
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 6616
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0889
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1662
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2142
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1539
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHZN/EST COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000354

SIPDIS

STATE ALSO FOR STUDZINSKI AND LANGE
USAID FOR TROSTLE, BLANCHET AND CARROLL
HHS FOR WSTEIGER/PBUDASHEWITZ
FAS FOR OCRA/FLEMINGS AND CURTIS, OSTA/WETZEL
FAS PASS FSIS AND APHIS
VIENNA FOR APHIS
BAGHDAD FOR FAS
BRUSSELS FOR APHIS/FERNANDEZ
GENEVA FOR HEALTH ATTACHE
ROME FOR US MISSION TO FAO

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958:N/A
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [CASC](#) [EAID](#) [SENV](#) [TU](#) [KFLU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE - NO HUMAN CASES

REF: A) ANKARA 283 AND PREVIOUS

B) ADANA 18

1. SUMMARY: The GOT moved rapidly to contain outbreaks of avian influenza in chickens in villages in Batman and Diyarbakir provinces in the southeast that began on February 5 (refs). Ministry of Agriculture (MARA) officials culled nearly 3,000 birds and are implementing other appropriate biosecurity measures. Although a number of people have been hospitalized and under observation, no human cases have been diagnosed. Samples from seven hospitalized patients tested negative for H5N1. The World Bank convened a meeting of international partners to coordinate activities associated with its \$54 million package. It executed its \$34 million loan and transferred funds to the GOT Treasury, including

the \$1 million USAID grant. Parties will form a working group to coordinate and strategize on restructuring the backyard poultry sector. End Summary.

AI Outbreak in Poultry in Batman and Diyarbakir

¶2. A total of nearly 3,000 birds have been culled since February 8 in the provinces of Batman and Diyarbakir since the first outbreak was discovered in the small village of Bogazkoy near Batman on February 5 (refs). There are new suspicious cases of poultry deaths in three locations in Diyarbakir Province and in another village in Batman Province. Four samples taken from these new locations were sent to Elazig Veterinary Control Laboratory on February 15. The results of rapid tests were positive for H5N1. Biosecurity measures include cleaning, disinfection, quarantine, and surveillance, as well as closing the local school as a precaution against mud on school buses spreading the virus.

¶3. On Feb 14, MARA confirmed that the H5N1 strain of AI was present in birds in the Yesilalan field in the Silvan district of Diyarbakir and in the Esentepe field in Batman district. Culling and quarantine procedures have been implemented. Meanwhile, authorities in southwestern Anatolia, far from the Batman outbreak, are investigating 20-25 wild ducks found dead near Burdur Lake in the Keciborlu District of Isparta. On February 12, samples were sent to Konya Veterinary Control and Research Laboratory. Initial test results were negative for AI but further investigations continue.

¶4. Overall, public and media reaction has been much more measured than last year. All confirmed cases have been in backyard farms in rural areas in the southeast, hundreds of miles from commercial poultry operations in the west. According to poultry producer associations, unlike last year there has been no drop in poultry and egg demand since the first outbreak last week.

No Human Cases

¶5. At this time, there do not appear to be any avian influenza cases in humans. On February 11, the Ministry of Health announced that tests for four initially hospitalized patients in Batman were negative. Three other patients from Batman were subsequently hospitalized and under observation for flu-like symptoms, but all tested negative and have been released from the hospital. Including other people deemed potentially exposed, a total of some twenty tests have been carried out at Ankara Refik Saydam Institute, and all have been negative for avian influenza. The CDC has been working closely with this laboratory and has provided equipment and primers for testing. WHO still encourages the Ministry of Health (MOH) to send specimens for confirmation testing in the UK, but so far they have not done so for these outbreaks.

International Partners - How to Restructure?

¶6. At February 14-15 meetings convened by the World Bank, international partners, including Embassy officers, were briefed on the Batman situation and discussed implementation of the \$54 million response and restructuring program. FAO veterinarians reported on their visit to the outbreak villages. FAO and others applauded the MARA and MOH response to the relatively small outbreak. Reaction time was fast: the first poultry death notification on February 5 prompted the start of culling on February 8, based on rapid test results. FAO did note that despite significant training efforts, there is still room for improvement in biosecurity: local MOH officials were negligent in not wearing protective gear in the quarantine area, and failed to disinfect their vehicle before leaving.

¶7. The World Bank reported that the loan and grant package, including the \$1 million from USAID, finally was executed and money transferred to the Turkish Treasury in early February. World Bank staff and consultants reviewed the terms of reference of the entire

project, and agreed on the need for closer cooperation on how to address the informal backyard poultry production in Turkey. After detailed discussion of the challenges, it was agreed to create a working group of stakeholders, including Embassy, to explore strategies for implementation of the Backyard Poultry Restructuring component. There will be an FAO-organized AI animal health workshop in Ankara at the end of February.

View from the Ministry of Health

18. MOH Yildirim Bayazit told us on January 31 that MOH and MARA were coordinating. He wondered if compensation funding and structure were clear enough to assure that individuals have incentive to quickly report suspected cases. Bayazit also said Ankara was working closely with the provinces on readiness and there were good stocks of tamiflu and protective gear. He said that MOH was doing active field training in WHO-guideline clinical procedures and they had just disseminated a new hospital crisis guide in Turkish.

19. Bayazit said WHO-Europe is planning a conference on clinical aspects and care of human infection with avian influenza (H5N1) virus March 19-21 2007 in Antalya, Turkey, but he did not have more details on agenda or participants. Embassy MED will likely participate. Bayazit complained that World Bank and EU funding had been very slow, despite promises of expediting normal procedures. Bayazit was complimentary of the relative speed of the CDC grant for \$325,000 to enhance regional lab capacity.

Wilson